



Chocolate Croissant

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Modification of Julia Child's Croissant Recipe

A note on flour. Although you can produce excellent croissants from all-purpose flour, bread flour, or frozen package white dough, the high gluten content makes for hard and rubbery rolling out. A mixture of 2 parts unbleached pastry flour and 1-part unbleached all-purpose flour gives a dough that is much easier to handle. Croissants made from unbleached flour are more tender in texture than those made from bleached flour; oil added to the basic dough helps to tenderize bleached flours.

The Basic Yeast Dough: For 1 dozen 5 1/2-inch Croissants (I doubled it for chocolate croissants)

Ingredients:

- 2 packages (½ ounce) dry active yeast
- ½ cup warm water (not over 110 degrees)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon sugar

Sprinkle the yeast over the warm water, add the salt and sugar, and let yeast stand until it has dissolved and risen in a soft mass on top of the liquid. This will take 5 minutes or so; prepare rest of ingredients while waiting for yeast to prove itself.

Ingredients:

- 4 cups of white flour (2 2/3 cups of pastry flour 1 ¼ cup unbleached flour)
- 1 ½ teaspoon of salt
- 2 tablespoons of sugar
- A mixing bowl
- For unbleached flour; 4 tablespoons of tasteless cooking oil
- 2/3 to 1 cup tepid milk

Place flour, salt, sugar, and oil in mixing bowl; add the dissolved yeast and 2/3 cup of tepid milk. Blend with a rubber spatula, pressing dough into a mass, then turn out onto a board. Begin lifting dough and throwing it roughly down on the board with one hand- it should be fairly soft and somewhat sticky at first; if it seems stiff, work in more milk by droplets. Continue lifting and throwing and, as dough becomes more elastic, folding and kneading it with the heel of your hand. Be rough, rapid, and energetic; in about 3 minutes dough should have enough body so it is smooth, elastic, and does not stick to your hand.

Rising:

Place dough in a clean bowl, set in a plastic bag, and let the dough rise until doubled in bulk; it should be light, and recede slightly to the pressure of your finger. At room temperature, rising time will be 1 to 1 1/2 hours. Be careful not to overrise, or the yeast will over ferment.

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Punching Down and Chilling:

When dough has risen, remove from the bowl and punch down into a flat circle. Wrap in waxed paper and chill for about 20 minutes; This will make the next step easier.

Basic Yeast Dough Becomes Croissant Dough:

Ingredients:

2 sticks (1/2lb.) chilled butter

Work the butter into a smooth consistency by beating it with a rolling pin, then pushing it out rapidly by bits with the heel of your hand; it must be entirely free of lumps, cold, and malleable, so it will roll easily with the dough. Form butter into a 5-inch square. With palms of hands, press cold dough into a flat 9-inch circle; set the butter square on top. Fold edges of dough up over butter, pinching edges together to seal in butter completely. Flour package lightly on both sides and place on board, enclosure side up.

Turns 1 and 2

With a lightly floured rolling pin, and pushing down and away from you, rapidly roll the package into a rectangle about 30 inches long and 10 inches wide. Keep sides of rectangle as straight as possible and remember that your object is to spread the layer of butter evenly between the two layers of dough the length and width of the rectangle. Sprinkle board and top of dough lightly with flour as necessary, to prevent sticking.

Fold the dough in three, as though folding a business letter, by lifting bottom of rectangle up over half the dough, and bringing top of rectangle down, making 3 even layers. Turn dough so top flap is to your right; roll again into a 30x10inch rectangle, and fold again into 3 layers. Flour lightly, wrap in waxed paper, and refrigerate for 1 to 2 hours; this chills the butter and relaxes the gluten or rubbery quality in the dough so that it may be rolled and folded again.

Turns 3 and 4

Repeat the process, with 2 more rollings and folding's into three. You now have 82 layers of dough and 81 layers of butter. Wrap and chill for 2 hours before forming the chocolate croissants. (Dough may be frozen at this point.)

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Chocolate Croissants

Ingredients

60% cocoa bar

Cut the chocolate bar width. You can get 8 to 10 pieces of chocolate per bar. You use two pieces of chocolate per croissant; therefore, you will need 24 pieces of chocolate. I recommend you purchase three bars of chocolate.

Forming the chocolate croissants. Lightly butter a 12x14 baking sheet. Cut the dough into two equal parts. Place one half in the refrigerator to chill. Roll the other half chilled dough into a rectangle about 20 inches by 5 inches; cut in half crosswise and chill one half. Roll reserved dough into 12x5inch rectangle and cut into thirds. Refrigerate two of the thirds. Roll one of the thirds into a 5 1/2 square and cut in half. You now have two smaller rectangles. Cut each rectangle in half and you have four squares. Place two pieces of chocolate at one end of the dough square. Make sure the chocolate is 60% cocoa and it is cut into 1/4 inch pieces for a bar of chocolate. Wrap the chocolate in the center of the dough. Make sure it is tight and place the seam of the dough down on the buttered baking sheet. With your fingers fold over onto itself and continue rolling up the dough. Repeat this method with all the croissant dough until 12 croissants are completed. (Keep unformed dough chilled, for easy handling.)

Rising:

Let the croissants rise for an hour or more at room temperature, until almost doubled, and light in texture. (Risen croissants may be frozen, then baked while still frozen.)

Glazing and Baking

Ingredients

1 egg beaten with 1/2 teaspoon of water

(Preheat oven to 475 degrees)

Set rack in middle level. Paint croissants with the egg to glaze them. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, until nicely browned. Cool on a rack for 10 to 15 minutes before serving.